

first day-workers site anywhere on the East Coast of the United States of America in 1994.

I relied on a fundamental American principle: All men and women are created equal. It is not that all men and women with a passport are created equal, or all men and women with a green card are created equal. Every human being should be treated with human respect and dignity, and we have failed to address this problem for 30 years.

Those same men who gathered on the street corners 27 years ago now have their own businesses, own their own homes, and their children went to school with my children.

One Dreamer graduated high school with my daughter, went on to graduate from college with a degree in biomedical engineering, got a master's degree in biomedical engineering, and is now pursuing a doctorate in the same subject. But, now, he is suffering every day, worrying about his immigration status, worried about how this court ruling will affect him and his family.

Dreamers have been shaken yet again. Let's fix this. Let's do it. Dreamers are ready to live the same American success story that my father lived.

Let's give Dreamers, TPS recipients, farmworkers, and other essential workers a path to citizenship, and let's do it now.

STANDING WITH PEOPLE OF CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. STEEL) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. STEEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Cuban people and in opposition to communism.

In the last week, we have seen thousands of people in Cuba rise up in protest against the decades-long communist regime that has oppressed millions.

Since these protests began, more than 100 people have been detained by the communist government or have been reported missing. In response to these protests, the government has shut down communications, turning off internet service to their own people.

When I see what is happening in Cuba, I am reminded again why America is the greatest country on Earth. In our country, a first-generation Korean American can build an American Dream here and become a Congresswoman. In our country, we respect and value our freedom of speech and expression.

My parents fled North Korea and the country's communist rule. My family knows what it was like to have to wait in line for basic necessities. That is not how people deserve to live, and that is how the people of Cuba are forced to live every day under communist rule.

We should stand with the people of Cuba. I stand with those fighting for freedom, justice, and democracy.

ENFORCE IMMIGRATION LAWS

Mrs. STEEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the crisis on our

southern border. As an immigrant to this country, I strongly support legal immigration and a system that is grounded in the rule of law.

The United States is a nation of immigrants. They add to the rich fabric of our country. However, we are also a nation of laws. The crisis on our southern border is not law and order.

As a Representative from California, a border State, I often hear from my constituents about their concerns with the chaos at our border created by the Biden administration's policies. The security of our borders and enforcement of our immigration laws are vital to the safety and security of our Nation.

We must contain this crisis and make it clear to the people that to come to America, you must do it legally.

REIMBURSE NATIONAL GUARD IMMEDIATELY FOR CAPITOL RESPONSE MISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. KAHELE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KAHELE. Madam Speaker, "Always Ready. Always There." That is the motto of our National Guard, our citizen soldiers, who, since 1636, have been prepared at all times as the first line of defense for our country.

When a natural disaster strikes—hurricanes, wildfires, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions—who do we call? We call the National Guard.

When a human-made disaster strikes—chemical spills, large-scale electrical power outages—who do we call? We call the National Guard.

When States and local governments get overwhelmed because of situations beyond their control, who do those Governors, mayors, and State legislatures call? They call the National Guard.

When a global health pandemic cripples the country, who do we call? We call the National Guard.

And when an assault on our Nation's Capitol, a deadly insurrection, happens, who do we call to protect this hallowed beacon of democracy, to ensure a safe, peaceful transfer of power can occur? We called the National Guard.

Every single time—"Always Ready. Always There"—the National Guard has answered the call. Our National Guard keeps us safe and has done so since the inception of our democracy.

Following the deadly January 6 insurrection and leading up to the inauguration of our President and Vice President on January 20, Congress called upon the National Guard, and an unprecedented 26,700 guardsmen from across the country were deployed to secure our Nation's Capitol and protect the very lawmakers and staff that work in this Capitol.

The Guard then continued to serve and support civil authorities in Washington, D.C., for the next 137 days. They left their families. Many took un-

expected leave from their civilian jobs during a health pandemic to report to our Nation's Capitol. They stood watch 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, many times in the frigid cold in the dark of night.

Many of us got to know them personally. We brought them food, coffee. We met them on the ramp at Andrews Air Force Base. We took pictures on the Capitol steps. We shook their hands and thanked them and their families for their service.

Our National Guard fulfilled their duty bravely and completed their mission. Now, it is Congress' turn to not only pay our respects but pay the bill that is due. What bill? What am I talking about? Well, it cost \$521 million to protect our Nation's Capitol for those 137 days.

National Guard leadership, adjutant generals, and State Governors sent their guardsmen to our Nation's Capitol with the promise that those funds would be repaid in a timely manner. As a result, the Army and Air National Guard paid for the Capitol Response mission and fronted the money from their own fiscal year 2021 funding. Time is of the essence, and we must pay them the money that we owe immediately and before August 1.

The reality is, if we fail to issue reimbursements by August 1, there will be real consequences. The National Guard Bureau has already sent out notices to States regarding canceling the remaining annual training days and/or canceling August and September drills. If training is canceled, several thousand guardsmen will not have enough service time this fiscal year to receive credit for a good year toward military retirement.

Approximately 2,000 functional and occupational training schools will be canceled, affecting their readiness, pay, and career progression. Ground vehicle and rotary wing operations and maintenance will be halted. Air National Guard flying operations will be negatively impacted, as they just only now begin the recovery from the effects of the pandemic. The 54th Security Forces Assistance Brigade combat training center rotation next month, in August, will be canceled.

Without reimbursement by August 1, it will take years to recover our readiness, which will be immediately impacted and decrease by up to 20 percent.

Those are some of the operational and readiness impacts of not meeting that August 1 deadline. But the real damages, Madam Speaker, are the profound personal impacts, which will have an immediate effect on the morale of those soldiers and airmen, their families, and retention across the 54 States and territories.

The increased psychological stress on our National Guard servicemembers and families in an already highly stressed environment is absolutely unacceptable. They are being asked to suffer, to sacrifice, because this body,

Congress, is unable to meet its end of a good-faith agreement with State leaders fully expecting to be reimbursed and not having to “take it out of hide,” which is what the National Guard is being asked to do now.

To put it simply, guardsmen—and I hear from them every single day—are in absolute disbelief that after all they have done this last year, answering our Nation’s call, this is how they are being treated.

Madam Speaker, today is July 21. We have 11 days. We must take immediate action. I urge all of us in Congress to swiftly come to an agreement on an appropriations emergency bill that includes full reimbursement of \$521 million for our National Guard by August 1. That is the least we can do for our citizen soldiers and their families who are always ready and always there.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CHARLES “CHUCK” POETTCKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Charles “Chuck” Poettcker who passed away suddenly on Saturday.

I had the honor of calling Chuck a friend. And I know that he is leaving a legacy that has impacted so many.

A U.S. Army veteran, Chuck served in the 101st Airborne Division stationed at Camp Evans in South Vietnam. At just 20 years old, he and his unit were given orders for a rescue mission in Laos. They were tasked with rescuing two door gunners and recovering the bodies of a downed helicopter pilot and co-pilot. Because of his heroic actions during the mission and journey back to safety, Chuck was awarded the U.S. Army Bronze Star.

A man of faith, Chuck prayed that if he made it out alive, he would dedicate his life to building something of value for others. He did just that.

He returned home and began a career as an apprentice carpenter, taking night classes in construction management at what is now the Southwestern Illinois College. He went on and founded Poettcker Construction, leading the company for 41 years. Today, the company employs over 200 families across 26 States.

He was also committed to his community and giving back to the Metro East area there in southern Illinois through numerous charities.

Madam Speaker, my prayers go out to Chuck’s wife, Linda, and his family and many friends during this difficult time.

SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS FOR VETERANS

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I also rise today to talk about the fact that when I ran Bost Trucking company for 10 years, many of our hardest workers and most trusted employees shared something in common. They were veterans.

The military teaches servicemembers invaluable skills, leadership, team-

work, and dedication to compete and complete the missions that they are assigned. But many veterans are facing challenges in finding work after COVID-19 shutdowns. That is why I have introduced the Veterans’ Agricultural Apprenticeship Act.

This bipartisan bill will help connect out-of-work veterans with farmers and ranchers who are in need of on-the-farm labor. It will help farmers and ranchers expand their operations while also offering the veterans new skills and career paths once they return home.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Florida (Mr. LAWSON) and our bipartisan group of 15 additional cosponsors for supporting this critically important bill. I hope that more of our colleagues will join us in helping advance a win-win solution to an ever-growing problem.

INVESTING IN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I stand today before this deliberative body to talk about the importance of rural infrastructure; more specifically, watershed and flood control infrastructure.

Our Nation’s watershed dams play a critical yet silent role in many of our daily lives. Across the Nation, watershed projects provide an estimated annual benefit of \$2.2 billion in reduced flood and erosion damage and improving wildlife, habitat, recreation, and water supply for more than 47 million people.

In my home State of Oklahoma alone, there are more than 2,000 watershed dam projects that help Oklahomans meet a myriad of public needs: public safety, water supply, soil health, and fish and wildlife management, just to name a few.

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In fact, the country’s first upstream flood control dam, Cloud Creek Site No. 1, was built right in the backyard of my district in Washita County. Built in 1948, following the passage of the Flood Control Act of 1944, the dam allowed for the preservation of farmland, wildlife, and several municipal services.

Fast forward to today, and many of our country’s 12,000 watershed dams have exceeded their designed lifespan. Like so much of the public infrastructure investments across this country, our watershed dams are aging and need to be upgraded to remain safe and continue to provide benefits for generations to come.

Seeing the need to rehabilitate many of our dams, in 2000 I authored the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments which have provided important investments to help countless dams in need of repair.

After more than two decades of funding through the Small Watershed Re-

habilitation Amendments, more than \$900 million has been appropriated for rehabilitating aging dams. In the 2018 farm bill alone, we provided \$50 million per year in mandatory funding for watershed rehabilitation and management.

I am proud to mark the 20th anniversary of the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments being signed into law this past year, but we must not delay the continued need to rehabilitate and repair other aging dams and water infrastructure. These silent sentinels are vital to public safety, economic prosperity, community viability and must not be allowed to fail.

We learned a lot of lessons 20 years ago in passing the dam rehabilitation bill. Now we must continue this mission as we debate and consider infrastructure legislation.

Madam Speaker, to aid in these efforts, I include in the RECORD the brought forth report at [damsafety.org \smallwatershed](https://damsafety.org/smallwatershed).

In closing, as Congress negotiates on how best to invest in our Nation’s infrastructure, we must continue to invest in the rehabilitation of these aging public works.

It is time to put the lessons of past appropriate investment to good use and build the capacity of a new generation to protect critical infrastructures for decades to come.

RECOGNIZING TIMOTHY J. BURKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and success of Timothy J. Burke, who retired from the Omaha Public Power District on July 2 after serving the company for 24 years. He began his career with OPPD in 1997 as vice president and in 2015 took over as the company’s 12th President and CEO.

During his time with OPPD, Tim faced some tough challenges, but with his tenacity and great leadership skills, he overcame them all.

Burke’s tenure as CEO will be remembered as one of transition. He made several decisions early on that set the future for OPPD. When he became the CEO, OPPD initiated utility-wide lean financial work to make the utility financially efficient and strong. Burke also made what he called the most difficult decision he ever made or had been involved with, recommending the closure of Fort Calhoun Nuclear Generating Station due to financial concerns and economies of scale at the country’s smallest nuclear plant.

In addition, under Burke, the company continued to achieve financial stability and 5 straight years of no general rate increase—which is amazing—which is now in its fifth year of no rate increases. Further, Burke’s time at OPPD included a transition to more renewable energy and the commitment to be a net zero-carbon emitter by 2050.